

# Asia-related literary texts to support the Australian Curriculum for English

**YEARS 7 - 8**

**Sorted by Title**

Title	Author	Text type	Setting	Further information
A Single Shard	Linda Sue Park	Novel, historical	Korea	Set in 12 <sup>th</sup> century Korea, this is the story of a journey beginning in a celadon pottery village. Male protagonist. <i>Newberry Medal</i> winner.
A Step From Heaven	An Na	Novel	Korea, USA	Heroine character and universal migrant family experience. Teacher notes are available online: <a href="http://www.allenandunwin.com/default.aspx?page=94&amp;book=9781865087931">http://www.allenandunwin.com/default.aspx?page=94&amp;book=9781865087931</a> <i>Award for Young Adult Literature.</i>
Angels of Kokoda	David Mulligan	Novel, historical	New Guinea	Set in WW2 Papua New Guinea with adolescent protagonists. Easy to read dialogue, narrative, letters and maps.
Bend it like Beckham	Narinda Dharmi	Novel, from film	Indian – UK context	Female protagonist, daughter of orthodox Sikhs, is a gifted soccer player; themes of equal opportunity, clash of cultural and generational values.
Bend it like Beckham	Girinder Chadha (director)	Film, 2002 feature film	Indian – UK context	Female protagonist, daughter of orthodox Sikhs, is a gifted soccer player; themes of equal opportunity, clash of generational values. Rated G (Australia).
Bound	Donna Jo Napoli	Novel	China	Based on Chinese Cinderella tales set in the Chinese Ming Dynasty. Female protagonist.



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Break of Day	Tony Palmer	Novel, historical	New Guinea	Powerful, insightful novel about love, war and duty set in WW2 Papua New Guinea. Explores notions of courage.
Broken Glass	Sally Grindley	Novel	India	A story of brothers Suresh and Sandeep surviving on their own in the streets of an Indian city.
China: Land of Dragons and Emperors	Adeline Yen Mah	Resource text, nonfiction	China	An insight into China's history, from the terracotta soldiers to Chairman Mao, from the Silk Road to the invention of gunpowder.
Chinese Cinderella and the Secret Dragon Society	Adeline Yen Mah	Novel, historical	China	Set in Shanghai, China in WW2 it is the story of a pilot rescue.
Film Asia: New Perspectives on film for English	Juanita Kwok & Lucinda McKnight	Resource text	Asia region, Intercultural knowledge	Provides stimulating background information and activities for fifteen films from Asia, including films listed here. Combines critical perspectives with teaching and learning ideas and supports teachers making links to Asia in creative and relevant ways in the English classroom.  Films featured for these levels include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Spirited Away</i> (Japan)</li> <li>• <i>Sumo Do, Sumo Don't</i> (Japan)</li> <li>• <i>The Cup</i> (Bhutan)</li> </ul>



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Foreign Devil	Christine Harris	Novel	China	Set in 19 <sup>th</sup> century China, the main character, Tyler, goes out on the Pearl River, Guangzhou, on a boat. <i>Aurealis Awards for Speculative Fiction, Winner Best Horror Novel 1999.</i>
Grass Sandals	Dawnine Spivak & Demi (illustrator)	Picture book, biographical including Haiku poetry	Japan	A simple retelling of the travels of 17th century Japanese poet, Basho, across his island homeland. The book includes examples of the haiku verses he composed.
Grave of the Roti Men	Geoff Havel	Novel	Indonesia, Australia	Set in Indonesia and northwest Australia, this is the story of an Australian boy who visits his divorced father in Indonesia. The novel includes information about the economic and traditional influences related to Indonesian ocean fishing.
Hana's Suitcase	Karen Levine	Novel	Japan, Europe	This novel is based on a true story about a suitcase with a European girls' name on it, which arrives at a Holocaust Centre in Japan. The Japanese students unravel its story. <i>Canadian Librarians Award: Best Book of the Year (2002).</i>



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Impressions	Anthony Bott, Lee Grafton, Carolyn Millard & Doug Trevaskis	Range of texts including: folktale, autobiography	Asia region	A range of accessible texts that explore voices from Asia through examples of different kinds of writing including folktales, myths, legends and autobiographies. Accompanied by activities in the teacher resource including opportunities for discussion, role play and development of critical reading skills. One of a series: <i>Impressions</i> (junior secondary), <i>Reflections</i> (middle secondary) and <i>Dimensions</i> (senior secondary).
Kaimira -Sky Village Book 1	Monk Ashland	Novel, fantasy series	China, USA	The main character is Mei and action takes place in the sky over China. The plot involves a Kaimira code and strange genes. Teaching notes are available on the publisher's website. The writer, Chris Rettstatt has taught in China and is writing as Monk Ashland.
Kampung Boy	Lat	Graphic novel, autobiographical	Malaysia	This is a funny and endearing autobiographical book by Malaysia's favourite cartoonist, telling the story of his childhood in rural Malaysia. It is full of social, cultural and environmental observations. Teachers notes are available at <a href="http://www.wilkinsfarago.com.au/Teachers_Notes_Kampung_Boy.pdf">http://www.wilkinsfarago.com.au/Teachers_Notes_Kampung_Boy.pdf</a>



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Kensuke's Kingdom	Michael Morpurgo	Novel	South Pacific region	One of the protagonists is washed overboard in the South Pacific near Papua New Guinea from the family's yacht. He survives on an island with a Japanese WW2 survivor named Kensuke. The author was appointed Childrens' Laureate in the UK in 2003. Winner <i>Childrens' Book Award</i> , 2000, UK.
Land of the Morning Calm: Korean Culture then and now	John Stickler; Soma Han (illustrator)	Picture book, nonfiction	Korea	This book has Stickler's informative text about Korea accompanied by Soma Han's beautiful illustrations. The writer lived in Korea for 13 years. Information about the Korean alphabet is included. The book can be browsed at <a href="http://www.shens.com/land_of_morning_calm/">http://www.shens.com/land_of_morning_calm/</a>
Mao's Last Dancer	Li Cunxin	Autobiography	China	This is the Young Reader's Edition of Li Cunxin's memoir of his origins in rural China and journey to become an international ballet dancer.
Moonshadow: Eye of the Beast	Simon Higgins	Novel, fantasy series	Japan	This novel is set in Japan's Tokugawa Era, and a boy spy is the hero. The author has immersed much of his life in things Japanese and practices martial arts to black belt level.
Night Singing	Kierin Meehan	Novel	Australia, Japan	This novel is set in Brisbane and features Mrs Murakami reminiscing about Japan and the war era. Winner <i>Patricia Wightson Prize</i> in the 2004 NSW Premier's Literary Awards.



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No-Name Bird	Josef Vondra	Novel	East Timor	Set at the time of the Indonesian take-over of East Timor in 1975 and tells the story of a boy, his uncle and a fighting cock they train.
One Whole and Perfect Day	Judith Clarke	Novel	Australia, Asia-related theme	Includes Clara Lee, a character who provides one Asian perspective through her role as the girlfriend of the main character. A multi-award winning book.
Peak	Roland Smith	Novel	Tibet, China, USA	The main character, Peak is the son of two mountain climbers. The story involves a Nepalese boy named Sun Jo who also has climbing ambitions. Much of the story is set on the Tibetan side of Mt Everest. Male readers review this novel very positively.
Sadako and the Thousand Paper Cranes	Eleanor Coerr	Picture book	Japan	This is the classic story of Sadako who was aged two when Hiroshima was bombed. Ten years later she was diagnosed with leukaemia. She resolves to fold one thousand cranes to defeat the illness.
Spilled Water	Sally Grindley	Novel	China	This tells the story of a girl named 'Spilled Water' but she triumphs over this label.
Spirited Away	Hayao Miyazaki (Director)	Film, 2002 animated feature film	Japan	This environmentally themed fantasy animation has a chapter for teachers in Kwok and McNight's <i>Film Asia</i> . Rated PG (Australia).



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Sumo Do, Sumo Don't	Masayuki Suo (director)	Film, 1992 feature film	Japan	This film is a comedy that examines modern Japanese youth attitudes to practising the traditional sport of sumo wrestling. Appeals to both male and female students. There is chapter for teachers in Kwok and McNight's <i>Film Asia</i> . Rated PG (Australia).
Tev	Brendan Murray	Novel	Tonga, Australia	Tev is raised in Australia by his Australian mother and Tongan father, but goes to Tonga aged 14. The writer lives on Christmas Island.
The Cup	Khyentse Norbu (director)	Film, 1999 feature film	Tibet, India	This entertaining film is about soccer and Tibetan monks. There is a chapter for teachers in Kwok and McNight's <i>Film Asia</i> and more information at <a href="http://www.buddhistfilmfoundation.org/festival-media/the-cup/">http://www.buddhistfilmfoundation.org/festival-media/the-cup/</a> Rated G (Australia).
The Rage of Sheep	Michelle Cooper	Novel	Fiji – Indian – Australian context	This novel is set in 1984 Australia with references to 80s music. Hester, of Fijian-Indian descent experiences life in Year 10 and its ups and downs. Explores the theme of racism.
The River	Libby Hathorn	Picture book, dual voices	China	This is the story of a quest involving a journey through traditional and contemporary China.
The Running Man	Michael Gerard Bauer	Novel	Vietnamese – Australian context	This is a contemporary story of a boy artist with a portrait assignment. It involves a Vietnam veteran and a silkworm metaphor.



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The Secret Life of Maeve Lee Kwong	Kirsty Murray	Novel	Australia, Hong Kong, Ireland	This novel follows Maeve, who has Chinese grandparents, in a search for belonging. Themes include the world of dance and music.
Three Cups of Tea	Greg Mortensen	Autobiography	Pakistan	This is about setting up schools in Pakistan. The writer was awarded the Star of Pakistan for his 15 years work in Pakistan. Further information about the author: <a href="http://www.threecupsoftea.com/greg-mortenson-bio-and-professional-photo/">http://www.threecupsoftea.com/greg-mortenson-bio-and-professional-photo/</a>
Throwaway Daughter	Ting-Xing Ye	Novel	China, Canada	This is the story of a Chinese baby girl named Winter Plum Blossom adopted by Canadians. They ensure she learns Chinese which helps her eventual identity quest.
Ties That Bind, Ties That Break	Lensey Namioka	Novel	China	Set in 1922 in China, third sister Ailin works out her place in society and observes 'big noses'.
Whale Rider	Niki Caro (director)	Film, 2002 feature film	New Zealand	This is a rite of passage film that explores Maori culture and the significance of whales. Beautiful scenery and soundtrack. Rated PG (Australia).
Year of the Tiger	Alison Lloyd	Novel, historical	China	This novel is set in ancient China and located near the Great Wall of China. It is history, action and adventure in a plot about archers.

